

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

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December 12, 1997

Ms. Magalie R. Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Ms. Salas:

With this letter, we are filing an original and 14 copies of Comments on Ex Parte Submissions by MSTV and ALTV in MM Docket No. 87-268. The Comments are being filed pursuant to the Commission's Public Notice of December 2, requesting comments on or before December 17.

Respectfully,



Jules Cohen, P.E.

Enclosures

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Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of)

Advanced Television Systems
and Their Impact Upon the
Existing Television Broadcast
Service)

) MM Docket No. 87-268

TO: The Commission

**COMMENTS ON *EX PARTE* SUBMISSIONS BY MSTV AND ALTV
SUBMITTED BY JULES COHEN, P.E.**

I. INTRODUCTION

These comments are being submitted to the Commission as the comments of an individual consulting engineer with over fifty years of service in the field of broadcasting and not in support of the interests of any particular television broadcast entity. My objective, like that of the Commission, is to achieve as smooth a transition as possible from the present world of NTSC to the DTV future.

My interest in converting to an improved television broadcast system began in 1982 with service on technical working groups of the Advanced Television Systems Committee (ATSC) and continued through the work of the Advisory Committee on Advanced Television Service (ACATS). I chaired the ACATS Field Testing Task Force, contributed to the product of a number of ACATS Working Parties, and was a frequent expert observer in DTV testing conducted at the Advanced Television Test Center (ATTC).

The Commission is to be commended on its solution of the Herculean task of assigning DTV channels to all television broadcasters. MSTV and the other broadcasters associated

with the *ex parte* submission have proposed modifications to the Table of Assignments in the Sixth Report and Order that take advantage of newly developed interference data, achieve better replication of existing service, and reduce DTV to DTV interference. ALTV has suggested an innovative solution to providing more competitive signal strength in some markets but, as suggested in more detail below, the proposal may not require any changes in Commission rules at this time.

II. TABLE REVISION VS. A CASE-BY-CASE APPROACH

Table revision at this time is strongly recommended over a case-by-case approach to Table modifications. Early construction and activation of DTV operations demand prompt knowledge of the channel assigned for broadcasting. Achievement of that prompt notification is possible only through modification of the Table as soon as the Commission confirms that the expected benefits forecast by the modifications are realizable.

The case-by-case approach is believed to be infeasible because of the inter-relation of assignments in a market and the additional burden placed on Commission staff of analyzing multiple proposals when presented. Of particular importance is the fact that major changes are needed in some of the principal markets in the country, the very locations where early introduction of DTV is important to provide digital service to as many television users as possible as quickly as possible. The Commission and broadcasters recognize the need to offer quickly a large customer base to the manufacturers of DTV receivers so that the economies of quantity production can result in reducing receiver prices. That reduction from the likely initial pricing of receivers is essential to assure that as large a portion of the population as possible can make the conversion to DTV quickly. Such conversion would make available to the Commission the early transition from NTSC, and its associated recovery of spectrum for purposes other than broadcasting.

III. THE ALTV PROPOSAL

ALTV has suggested an innovative approach to the problem of achieving competitive signal strength in at least the core of a market. That approach requires specific tailoring, station by station, of the antenna and power to be employed. In some instances, use of high power and extreme beam tilting may actually result in receiver overloading, a result to be avoided. The rules adopted by the Commission in the Sixth Report and Order would appear not to preclude the use of innovative engineering solutions to providing greater signal strength in parts of the total area of service but avoiding the imposition of interference to other television stations, whether they be DTV or NTSC. Perhaps all that is required by the Commission is affirmation that proposals for improvement in service will be accepted with a suitable showing that the proposed change can be achieved without causing any more interference than that contemplated by use of the facilities specified in the Table of Assignments.

With regard to the matter of interference, the eventual adoption of a *de minimis* standard as suggested by MSTV, *et al.* would be desirable. A standard for interference caused is, of course, not the subject of the present comments but should be addressed at such time as broadcasters are prepared to suggest such a standard.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jules Cohen".

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December 11, 1997